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# THE ZOOLOGIST:

*A Monthly Journal*

OF

## NATURAL HISTORY,

FOR

RECORDING FACTS AND ANECDOTES

RELATING TO

QUADRUPEDS, BIRDS, REPTILES, FISHES AND INSECTS.

Conducted by EDWARD NEWMAN, F.L.S., F.Z.S., &c.

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## NOTICES OF NEW BOOKS.

‘*Travels of a Naturalist in Japan and Manchuria.*’ By ARTHUR ADAMS, F.L.S., Staff-Surgeon, R.N. Hurst & Blackett. 1870. 334 pp. Demy 8vo.

(SECOND AND CONCLUDING NOTICE.)

WE are now in China: my fellow-traveller, for I cannot forego the companionship of one so agreeable, has just been describing the proportions of some minute monster of the deep, and comparing him with the sea serpent. Shade of Hans Egede! ghost of Pontoppidan! can you repose in your frost-bound tombs when you hear of a sea serpent fourteen inches long? It is an outrage on common sense. Had the length been extended to fourteen hundred feet it might have been borne; if yards, it would have been triumphant; but fourteen inches! the subject is too painful. It boots little that Mr. Adams compromises the matter by stating that he obtained many of these *Trichiuri* at Staunton Island five feet in length: the “fourteen inches” is insuperable!

I turn with relief to a shower of insects, a subject which was formerly very familiar to the readers of the ‘*Zoologist*,’ and one which has been reproduced of late years *usque ad nauseam* by every entomologist who can hold a pen. *Coccinella bipunctata*, *Coccinella septempunctata*, *Syrphus Pyrastris*, *Syrphus balteatus*, &c., have reappeared as freshly and as vigorously as if they had never been embalmed in the pages of the ‘*Zoologist*,’ but in this instance it is a lamellicorn, a species of *Rhizotragus*, that invites our attention.

“A few nights before the landing of the allied forces at the Pei-ho an interesting phenomenon was visible, namely, that of mock moons and a double rainbow. A circumstance, moreover, which superstitious Chinamen might also regard as a portent, but which the naturalist would certainly look upon with interest, was a shower of beetles. A black species of *Rhizotragus* (a sort of chaffer) fell down upon the ships in countless numbers. Our awnings were spread, and the beetles descended continuously all the first watch. Numbers were crushed and trodden into the deck, leaving greasy patches which it required the carpenter’s plane to obliterate. They afforded constant excitement to ‘Belle,’ a beautiful retriever, who passed the night in chasing and crunching them between her teeth. In the morning heaps of the



dead and wounded were swept into corners and under guns. Coal-black lines, following the ripples of the tide, stretched away for miles down the Gulf, formed entirely of the drowned bodies of these insects."—P. 105.

In compliment to our sensational entomologists, and in continuation of this exciting theme, I must extract a paragraph on ladybirds, hoping it may afford wholesome *pabulum* for our scribes during the approaching winter campaign: the "countless myriads" and "Pharaoh's host" have the ring of the true metal, and I positively envy the feelings of the first aspirant for renown who shall reproduce them before a learned and admiring audience.

"Along the margin of the shallow bay, and in the seaweedy pools left by the receding tide, were countless myriads of ladybirds, drowned, like Pharaoh's host, in the waters of the sea. They had been blown from the opposite coast, and were now driven up by the waves in ridges miles long and in red heaps among the hollows and corners of the outcropping granite rocks. Here and there we came across a magnificent swimming crab; but these waifs and strays were just as eagerly sought after by lean, hungry cormorants and loud-screaming gulls as by inquisitive peripatetic naturalists, who only came in for a scattered mass of fragments too hard and spiky even for the maw of cormorant or gull."—P. 107.

Let me turn to another section of the Animal Kingdom, a section hitherto not quite so exhausted as that to which *Rhizotragus* and *Coccinella* belong—I mean the *Acalephs*; these have long been a fertile theme with the producers of what is called "tall writing." There is a species very common on our coasts which is said to be the terror of those stout-hearted Britons who occasionally delight to take a header in the briny deep. "It is the terror of bathers, and once tangled in its trailing hair, the unfortunate who has recklessly ventured across the graceful monster's path, too oft writhes in prickly torture. Every struggle but binds the poisonous threads more firmly round his body, and then there is no escape; for when the winder of the fatal net finds his course impeded by the terrified human"—terrified human! is not that good—"the terrified human wrestling in his coils, he, seeking no combat with the mightier biped, casts loose his envenomed arms and swims away. The amputated weapons severed from the parent body vent their vengeance on the cause of



their destruction, and sting as fiercely as if the original proprietor itself gave the word of attack."

This brilliant extract from a popular Cyclopædia, Art. "Medusa," is at least equalled by a parallel passage in Wood's 'Natural History,' vol. iii. p. 745. "This harmless-looking creature is in truth one of the few inhabitants of the sea that are to be feared by bathers on our favoured shores; but its presence is so much to be dreaded that no one who has once suffered from the lash of its envenomed filaments will venture to bathe without keeping a watch on the surrounding water. I have twice undergone the torment occasioned by the contact of this creature, and know by experience the severity of its stroke. At its first infliction the pain is not unlike that caused by the common stinging nettle, but rather sharper, and with more of a tingling sensation. Presently, however, it increases in violence, and then seems to attack the whole nervous system, occasionally causing a severe pain to dart through the body, as if a rifle-bullet had passed in at one side and out at the other."—May I here interpolate the humiliating confession that I never experienced the sensation.—"Both the heart and lungs suffer spasmodically, and the victim occasionally feels as if he could not survive for another minute."

It is a comfort to know that the "terrified human" is sometimes avenged for all his suffering and all his terror; for, reverting to our author, to whom I owe an apology for this digression, I find the "graceful monster" is sliced up and eaten in that country we are accustomed to denominate "Celestial."

"But what is that mysterious object rolling and tumbling in the ripple of the tide? We observe its motions for a short time with a curious eye, but on approaching perceive that it is an immense Rhisostoma, stranded and helpless, at the mercy of the waves. It was certainly the biggest jelly-fish I had ever seen, measuring three feet across the disk. The unfortunate Medusa had not only the misfortune to be wrecked, but had to suffer the still more dire calamity of being eaten. Chinamen came down, like Riff pirates, or Cornish wreckers, to the scene of the disaster, and cut off huge slices of the firm translucent blubber, and carefully wrapping them in cloths carried them away for gastronomic use. Doubtless their insipid mess of boiled rice was greatly improved thereby at evening chow-chow. This is the only instance I have known of any of the Acalephæ being used as food."—P. 117.

Our traveller now lands on a projecting point on the eastern side of the Gulf of Liau-tung, forty miles north of Hulu-shan Bay, where terminates the Great Wall of China, that "wonder of the world." Here the exploring party left their boat and proceeded on foot across a sandy belt of land, with a chain of fresh-water ponds with muddy spaces between them, where the curlew and the whimbrel, the plover and the snipe, found ample feeding-ground, plunging their beaks into the congenial ooze, and the herons, those gloomy monopods, wait in patience the approach of the scaly prey.

"Nearer the sea long salt-water lagoons and shallow swamps extended, covered in some parts with a white-flowered sea lavender and the blue star of *Aster Tripolium*. From these the great white heron slowly rose, with bright yellow bill pointing out in front, and long black legs stretched out behind, and after a few lazy flaps with his huge curved wings, alighted again to resume his interrupted fishing. Equally familiar was his yet larger cousin in gray, the common heron, and, standing on one leg, her loose snowy plumes waving in the breeze, the elegant white egret dreamed of frogs and fishes. Sandpipers and greenshanks ran piping and probing about the margin, and gulls and little terns screamed, quarrelled and hovered over the heads both of bipeds and birds. As I stooped to collect some specimens of pond-snails in one of the clear fresh-water ponds with a bottom of sandy mud, my attention was arrested by an object which at first sight I regarded as an unknown genus of bivalve Mollusca, but on placing it in a bottle of water the real nature of the creature became revealed. It was an Entomostrakon. As a whale among minnows, so, said I, is my new genus among water-fleas; but again I was mistaken. I had not fished long before I brought to light a veritable Apus, or shield-shrimp, and I saw at once that my supposed new genus was the young of this creature, thus illustrating very prettily the law in the development of organized beings, that the transition state of a higher form will represent the permanent condition of genera lower in the scale of being. I cannot find any account of the metamorphoses of the Apodidæ, or whether it is known that in the young state the shield is folded on itself longitudinally in the form of a bivalve shell which entirely conceals the head, body and feet of the animal. There is but a single large black eye in these young ones, situated Polyphemus-like in the middle of the forehead. The very young larvæ are of a pale horn-colour, and swim in a steady manner forwards, the ventral

edge of the shell being directed downwards. As they move through the water they partially expand and close the valves of the shell. Older and larger individuals are olivaceous, and are fond of lying on their sides in the sand at the edge of the pond, now and then spinning round and round by means of their protruded tail. The adult of Kroyer's shield-shrimp, as it may be called, keeps in deep water, and is voracious and predatory, not confining his attention to small things in the water, but even feeding on drowned dragon-flies."—P. 121.

Let us now pay a visit to the Korea, that *terra incognita* of distant Europeans, that square block of land that seems in our maps to hang down between the Yellow Sea and the Sea of Japan, and with the natives of which the doctor appears to have been pleased, notwithstanding the somewhat discouraging impression made by the first interview. "We found them kinder than was warranted by their looks." One of their customs, noticed by the previous traveller, Hamel, Mr. Adams thinks worthy the imitation of Christian nations, and that is the care which sons take of their fathers. "When a father is four score years of age, he declares himself incapable of managing his estate and resigns it to his children. Then the eldest, taking possession, builds a house at the common expense for his father and mother, where he lodges and maintains them with the greatest respect." This is doubtless commendable in both father and son, but it has another teaching which our doctor seems rather to have overlooked; and that is that the prolongation of human life to four score years is spoken of as an occurrence that needs no comment. But I must allow the doctor to discourse of his doings in his own pleasant manner, and not introduce reflections of my own.

"One afternoon, while lying at anchor in the safe and pretty port of Mah-lu-san, one of the Korean group, there was a seining party, which I accompanied. The day was lovely; the whole face of the country was bright and smiling; the barley was ripe in the fields, the hills were covered with a varied green, and the little rippling waves of the clear water of the bay were dancing in the sun. Stretching far away to the north and to the south were groups of dark-blue islets, rising mistily from the surface of the sea—glimpses of that mysterious Archipelago, among the unknown islands of which I cruised in by-gone years. The sea was covered with large picturesque boats, which, crowded with Koreans in their white fluttering robes, were putting off from the adjacent villages, and sculling across the pellucid water to

visit the stranger ship. We chose a sheltered bay, and commenced paying out the seine. Koreans, seated in groups bare headed, or wearing their broad-brimmed hats, were smoking their pipes in silence, as they inquisitively observed our proceedings. The rooks in the tall and glorious trees that fringed the bay cawed loudly with indignant remonstrance at the unwonted intrusion upon their quiet haunts; while the sailors, to the tune of their popular songs, hauled in the great net, in which upwards of one hundred and seventy pounds of bream and other fish were taken. I, of course, took the opportunity while here of pursuing, with my usual zeal, my natural-history inquiries. Among the denizens of the sea I noticed toad-fishes, devil-fishes, sea-horses and swimming crabs. I also noticed a great many individuals of a singular viviparous fish, most of which had three or four living young ones in their bellies. I believe the fish belongs to a genus described by Temminck under the name of *Ditrema*. I also found, as I strolled away from the seining party, a singular species of *Arum*, with long curling horns extending from its lurid spathes. The natives were just as friendly as when I visited the group in 1845. An old man with a basket of sea-weed on his back stopped me, and would fain persuade me to taste of his Laminarian dainty. A little further on, a young lad made a friendly advance by biting off a portion of lily root and offering me the remainder, while a small boy brought me wild raspberries strung upon a straw.

“On one occasion, while out with my friend Buckley in search of adventures, we observed a sandy mud-flat in the distance, on the other side of which was a breakwater formed of heaped-up boulders. On approaching nearer, we were struck with a peculiar blue appearance of the sand-flat, which, strange to say, on our arrival suddenly disappeared, but not before the cause of the peculiar phenomenon revealed itself in the form of thousands of struggling, round-bodied, blue crabs, which were frantically endeavouring to hide themselves in the yielding sand, for such is the remarkable habit of *Scopimera globosa*. The wave-worn stones of the breakwater were partly concealed by tangled vines and the creeping stems of *Convolvulus maritima*. On this occasion we had to do battle with a snake. While Buckley was proceeding in advance, I observed that he suddenly became excited, stopped, and beckoned, pointing emphatically right before him. Sure that something must be wrong, I hurriedly rushed to his assistance, just in time to cut off the retreat of a large mottled snake as he was trying to escape among the tangled vines



and boulders. A slight blow on the back arrested his progress, paralyzing the after part of the body. He turned fiercely round, hissing and protruding his long, black, fork-like tongue, we both belaboured the unfortunate reptile and soon finished him. An examination of his mouth showed him to be a snake of a highly venomous character, the poison-fangs being truly formidable."—P. 153.

This little excitement over and gone, we once more survey the surface of the country and peacefully examine its productions and its characters. In Deer Island our traveller's spirit seems to have taken great delight: it is green and hilly, covered with low trees and full of loose moss-grown lichen-covered stones: rills at which the hog-deer came to drink and the wild pigs to feed on fallen acorns: the ancient weather-stained masses of rock are here often heaped upon one another in the wildest confusion, and are beautifully encrusted with lichens of every hue, frosty white, pale green, rusty brown and bright orange. This is the dwelling-place of the "harlequin" toad, a fellow that rejoices in a jacket of the most vivid scarlet mingled with black: the rain, with which the bright rocks were still dripping, had brought out the worms and other delicacies on which these brilliant fellows feed, and caused them to exhibit themselves to perfection on the lichen-stained stones, which vied with them in the gaiety of their colouring. Here also is the home of the musk-deer, and notwithstanding the rugged face of the country and the abundant coverts, no less than nine fell to the rifles of the officers of the "Actæon."

Having surveyed the greater portion of the Gulf of Liao-tung, the ship arrived at the mouth of the river of the same name, and found there a town of considerable importance, the staple produce of which seemed to be pork.

"On going ashore we found ourselves immediately in the land of pigs, and encompassed by the mud and dirt congenial to these animals. The poor porkers are killed and cured here for the markets of China, and everywhere we were surrounded by numerous bands of victims destined for slaughter. Vicious, long-headed, and obstinate, incredible numbers of them were being driven through the muddy streets, making the place resound with their sharp and piercing cries. Men in huge leathern boots were staggering under sides of bacon; large flat carts were heaped with brown flitches; boys were reeling under the weight of enormous hams; and boars' heads seemed to gaze

reproachfully at you on shop-boards and out of windows. In short, the whole town was filled with evidences of the thriving trade by which the inhabitants gained their living."—P. 171.

Proceeding to Dagelet Island, our author bears willing testimony to the fidelity of La Perouse's description: this island consists chiefly of a single mountain peak clothed with trees from the shore to the summit. Here the doctor's admiration was divided between the scenery and the sea-bears.

"We saw the grand central peak towering four thousand feet above us, partially enveloped in clouds. Around its base were huge detached rocks, some of them four or five hundred feet high, one resembling a sugar-loaf, and another a rude arch. Within a little distance from the shore numbers of sea-bears, of a reddish brown colour, came up repeatedly and barked around the boat. The mad pranks and uproarious conduct of these strange ursine creatures offered a striking contrast to the placid demeanour of the gentle *Phocæ*, or common seals, which only raised their round heads above the water, wonderingly gazed around, and quietly sank again below the surface. Shoals of black fish rose up further off, baring their dark rounded backs; while several right whales were spouting in the far distance. Some flying fish leapt from the water, pursued by a large fish of the mackerel tribe, a noticeable fact, for seals and flying fish are not usually seen together."—P. 174.

It is remarkable that La Perouse, who described this beautiful island so truthfully, never landed there. One would have thought the temptation too great to be resisted: be this as it may, it is pretty certain that none of the officers of the "*Boussole*" went on shore, and it appears that Mr. Adams and his brother officers were the first Europeans who had ever set foot on the island. They made their way by dried-up water-courses up the sides of the mountain, and observed in this distant land the common wild thyme, the yellow stone-crop, the figwort, junipers and sycamores, while the familiar cormorants, hawks, gulls, pigeons, blackbirds and sparrows were the only birds, and the only indication of a mammal was the skull of a cat.

A similarly British character pervades the herbage in a charming little bay on the Manchurian coast, which was next examined. Cattle and horses were grazing in a pasture composed of birds-foot trefoil and grasses not to be distinguished from those of England; the very dandelion was the same, and in the deposits left by the earth were

found *Aphodius*, *Geotrupes* and *Onthophagus*. The novelty as well as the interest of this narrative consists in the finding and recording such familiar objects in so unfamiliar a country. Here, however, in company with the other *Coprophagi*, was a species of *Sisyphus*, and this claims closer attention, and, with the ardour of a Power, our entomological traveller proceeded to gather the *Sisyphi* into his collecting-bottle: imagine him on his knees with digger in hand, gazing with real enjoyment on every beetle that has upturned. But

“What is that dark body moving steadily and slowly across the plain? It is a herd of cattle commanded by a patriarch bull, with a great black head, reddish eyes, short horns, and a dewlap that nearly touches the ground. We are serenely engaged in disentombing *Sisyphus*, and, just looking up, we continue our occupation. The moving mass of cows and calves, led on by the patriarch, steadily advances. There are many stoppages, much pawing of the ground, and some low bellowings, but—onward it comes. Prudence suggests a retreat; courage and a desire for more specimens of *Sisyphus*, urge our remaining. So, putting on an indifferent air, we go on turning over the sandy deposits. This seems to have some effect on the bovine party. The patriarch bull, his admiring cows and offspring, the playful calves, make a dead halt and stand staring. Thus we continue while a shard remains unexamined, when we rise, and, resuming our stick, stroll with a would-be careless air towards the beach. The patriarch bull with the great curly head and dewlap, and all his wives and concubines, follow us down to the water, where, luckily a boat being handy, we leave them.”—P. 179.

As our doctor passes from place to place, and touches on each with a light and cheerful pen, just giving an understanding glance and nothing more at what he sees, there is some difficulty in accompanying him, and one feels sadly the want of a good map showing his course. Probably he concludes that his readers are well up in the geography of Manchuria, and are able to locate with precision such bays as Sio-wu-hu, Olga and St. Vladimír, but this cannot be the case with readers in general, and certainly is not with myself: beyond a general and vague idea of the coast line, and a school-boy recollection where to look for the Korea and Saghalien, I must plead guilty to a very superficial knowledge of the ship's course, and of the names of places which now follow so quickly in succession: Risiri, Rifunsiri, Todomosiri, Tsu-sima, Aniwa, and so forth, come tumbling one over another

without imparting any precise idea of their whereabouts. I make this confession rather with a view to disarming the critic who might otherwise delight in pointing out that I had erroneously placed Rifunsiri to the east instead of the west of Todomosiri, or *vice versâ*, and so elicit great cachinnation from a pseudo-philosopher to whom the two places were equally unknown. I can only say, therefore, that it was somewhere on the coast of Manchuria, and probably near Olga Bay, that the first lieutenant of the "Actæon" swapped his coat for a deer-hound. He (the hound, not the lieutenant) had a splendid brush for a tail and a fawn-coloured skin, and excited the admiration of the "Actæon" by quarrelling with another animal of the same species over a fish's head. It was love at first sight: the lieutenant determined that Quilee—that was the name of the hound—should be his own. He produced his dollars, but the poor fisherman refused; not insensible to the value of the proffered coin, but preferring his dog to the shining silver. Recklessly the lieutenant stripped off his coat and offered to barter it for Quilee: the coat conquered: the Manchu was overcome: the gold lace and the brass buttons were too much for him: Her Majesty's uniform was transferred to the Manchu and Quilee to the "Actæon."

Pass we on to the cemetery of seals in Aniwa Bay, to the north of Cape Notoro, in Saghalien. The bay is "composed"—I use the author's expression—"of rounded rocks and drifted shingle." It is here that the aged and infirm seals come to breathe their last in peace; here they seek refuge from the teeth of their fellow-creatures: sheltered by huge boulders of granite and concealed by grass and reeds, they here find an open grave: their bones were strewn around, and the only sounds that interrupted the silence of this "last rest" of seals were the cries of wild swans passing high overhead and the caw of a rook pursued by an unrelenting falcon.

The little island of Todomosiri is situated on the north side of the west entrance to La Perouse Strait: this is equally desolate with Aniwa Bay: it is a huge mass of trachyte rising fifteen hundred feet abruptly from the sea: here the only living objects were a large brown gull feasting on offal, a lonely cormorant seated with outstretched neck and expanded wing on a salient angle of black crag; a little hawk soaring high above the summit; oysters, mussels and limpets; and a solitary *Silpha*: but I am omitting the seals: strange omission, it is like the play of Hamlet with Hamlet left out. Seals were everywhere diving and swimming and floating, some with their round bullet-heads above the water, others far beneath the surface. The bones of some



were bleaching in the wind; the flesh of others had been torn off by gulls and cormorants: the dirt and stench below, and the huge weird rocks towering above produced an impression anything but agreeable.

"We anchored pretty close under the lee of the island, directly opposite a little white shingly cove, with patches of long coarse reedy grass in the background. This is a favourite resort of the seals, and nowhere can their manners and customs be more favourably studied. The old gray bulls rear the fore part of their bodies and slowly sway themselves from side to side, meanwhile throwing up their great heads and bellowing continuously. The cows and their calves are congregated together in a coterie by themselves; and reposing on the outlying rocks, in attitudes anything but graceful, is an entire seraglio of young females. The noise made by the seals during the night is something fearful. One might imagine it to be something like the croaking of Brobdignag bull-frogs varied at intervals by deep growls and sharp cries, loud snortings, dissonant brayings, and other sounds of a more unearthly kind. Three individuals fell victims to the prowess of our sportsmen, and were towed on board in triumph."—P. 226.

The account of Ainos is replete with interest; the exact correspondence of the statements now published and those made by La Perouse, two hundred years ago, is very striking: the litter of blind puppies, the barking mother and hiding woman, detected, hunted to earth, as a fox-hunter would term her hovel, are all reproduced, and will hereafter serve me for a text when winding up my "Death of Species." These ancient people at any rate are not progressive; they seem slowly and placidly folding their garments around them, and, like Bewick's worn-out horse, to be "waiting for death": their only occupation is the capture of salmon, and these noble fish, too good to eat, they sell to the Japanese, "reserving for themselves the stench of putrefaction, which adheres to their clothes, their houses, and to the very grass which surrounds their villages." So wrote La Perouse, and Mr. Adams confirms it to the very letter. These people have nothing in common with their neighbours, the Japanese: it was thought probable they might speak a language somewhat resembling Japanese, and so belong to the same linguistic family: this has been entirely disproved, and M. de Rosney observes, in his 'Introduction to the Study of Japanese,' that "the idea is completely inadmissible."

We pass on to Japan, and take leave of our accomplished traveller at the now familiar town of Nagasaki, leaving him to study the poodles, the nuthatches, and the salamanders, and thanking him most sincerely for a delightful book, written in the best vein of that good humour which is ever cheering to the reader, and with that intelligence which cannot fail to instruct while it amuses and delights.

“One of the most curious sights in Nagasaki is the dog-fancier’s shop, where the far-famed little poodles are sold. You enter a large apartment, where, under the care of a young and handsome woman, are specimens of the canine species of all ages, from the blind struggling puppy to the dog of elderly and respectable appearance. The dog-fancier’s wife, who had a sick poodle in her arms, said to me, ‘I have no children, so I tend and care for these small dogs,’ for they are all of the same diminutive breed. It is a singular fact, but they thrive best upon hard dried salmon, which is carefully scraped for them by their kind mistress. There were more than forty dogs in her keeping, and she informed me that last year she lost thirty at one time from influenza. The song birds in the shop are also very pretty, as are the nuthatches, which are kept in very tall cages, with an upright stick in the middle, at the top of which is a cross-piece with a notch, in which the bird places the nut or berry, which he hews with his pick-like bill till he gets at the kernel. Instead of the more yielding fruit of the yew, which is the usual food of the nuthatch of Japan, at one time I substituted hard hazel-nuts. As the bird was unable to crack these, he placed them one by one in his water-glass, evidently with the notion that they would in time become softer—an interesting proof of intelligence on the part of these birds. Here also I saw several fine specimens of *Sieboldia maxima*, the gigantic salamander of Japan. They are kept in large dark tanks, and are as ugly reptiles as can be well imagined; black sluggish creatures with warty skins, flat heads, no eyes worth mentioning, blunt noses, and short sprawling legs. They are said to come from the mountain streams of Kiusiu, but in reality they are from the neighbourhood of Osaca, in Nippon. The only kind of salamander I saw in the shallow streams which are numerous about Nagasaki, was the little dingy triton, with an orange-mottled belly, very similar to the water newt of Europe. I bought a couple of *Sieboldias* for the captain, and had them conveyed on board with a plentiful supply of small live eels for their maintenance during the voyage to England. One of these creatures died in the transit,

and his bones are now in my museum; the other, I believe, is still to be seen, the 'admired of all admirers,' in the reptile room of the Zoological Gardens. When they had consumed all the eels, small pieces of raw meat were given them, and really, in their purblind way, they seemed to relish them as much as they did the slippery living prey. One of the sailors, when exhibiting them to his gaping companions, incautiously handled the big one, which, obviously indignant, turned suddenly and severely lacerated his hand. His comrades, believing the wound to be dangerous, for they imagine these reptiles to be very venomous, showed great sympathy for him in his calamity, but beyond the temporary inconvenience, no serious consequence resulted."—P. 277.

EDWARD NEWMAN.

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*Ornithological Notes from Norfolk—January to September, 1870.*

By HENRY STEVENSON, Esq., F.L.S.

(Continued from S. S. 2058.)

JANUARY.

*Forktailed Petrel*.—One picked up dead at Gooderstone early in the month; also a storm petrel at Hasboro.

*Green Sandpiper*.—A single bird killed at Cawston on the 1st.

*Kingfisher*.—In my previous notes I referred to the large numbers of these birds killed during the autumn and winter of 1869. One bird-stuffer in Norwich received thirteen, from various parts of the county, during the first week in January of the present year.

*Bittern*.—As usual not uncommon during the sharp weather. A fine female was killed at Wroxham on the 6th; another on the 8th, at Catfield; and a third at Wramplingham, on the 27th; also one at Weeting, on the 30th.

*Shore Lark*.—See separate notice of these birds at the conclusion of these "Notes."

*Smew*.—January 15. An immature male and two young females.

*Blackbird*.—During the last week of this month I saw two male varieties, prettily mottled with white, and a female with the secondaries dull white.

*Peregrine*.—January 18. A fine adult female shot at Dersingham; one at Beachamwell; and two at Hunstanton early in the month. One killed whilst feeding on a gull.

*Siskin and Redpoll*.—In spite of the severity of the weather there has been a remarkable absence of siskins this winter, as remarked by our birdcatchers; and redpolls of both species have been scarce.

*Gray Wagtail*.—Several observed about the drains in the meadows at Keswick, near Norwich, previous to and during the frosty weather.

#### FEBRUARY.

*Bittern*.—Two purchased in the Norwich fish-market about the first week of this month, and another on the 12th.

*Wild-fowl*.—As evidences of the extremely severe weather of the previous week, our fish-market, on the 12th, contained scaups, golden-eyes, wigeon, and tufted ducks, with fine old male birds of each species, common and blackheaded gulls, and large bunches of dunlins, larks, fieldfares and greenfinches. Immense numbers of the common scoter were observed off the coast, and on the larger broads the fowl, chiefly wigeon and tufted ducks, collected in considerable quantities on the ice, and were therefore extremely difficult of approach.

*Shieldrake*.—An unusual number of these handsome fowl were killed during this month in various localities. One at Hickling on the 10th; one on the 11th at Stalham; three at Gunton, near Lowestoft, on the 12th and 15th; two at Salthouse on the 14th; one at Cromer on the 15th; and on the 25th two at Cley.

*Goosander*.—A fine adult male, with salmon-tinted breast, shot at Stalham on the 10th; young birds and females not uncommon during the hard frosts. Several adult birds were seen on Fritton Lake, near Lowestoft, towards the end of this month.

*Redbreasted Merganser*.—Besides immature birds, several magnificent old males were killed about this time. On the 21st I had one sent me, from Cley, in perfect plumage. On the 18th another was shot on Breydon, and two more at Cley on the 26th.

*Ruff*.—See Mr. Gunn's note in the 'Zoologist' (S. S. 2103).

*Brambling*.—Very plentiful during the severe weather. On the 13th, with a driving N.E. wind, and a deep snow on the ground, a small beech plantation close to Norwich was full of these birds, which, with chaffinches, titmice and other small birds, fed on the beech-mast, wherever exposed by the wind drifting the snow from the ground in places. Blackbirds and thrushes suffered considerably from cold and hunger.

*Wild Geese*.—A few Brent geese in the Norwich market, but no other species throughout the winter.



*Hen Harrier*.—An adult female at Yarmouth on the 18th.

*Little Grebe*.—As usual during severe frosts, dabchicks had a hard time of it, and many were shot in the smaller streams. On the 26th one was found dead, with a "miller's thumb" sticking in its throat.

*Blackthroated Diver*.—A female, with partial black throat, killed on Breydon, on the 19th, and another, immature, on the 23rd. Young redthroated divers not uncommon on the rivers and broads.

*Merlin*.—An adult female merlin shot on the 12th.

*Sclavonian Grebe*.—Several examples killed in full winter plumage.

*Gulls*.—The heavy winds that drove these birds inland about the middle of this month caused a considerable slaughter by the gunners. Some two dozen were brought into Norwich by one man, about the 19th, consisting chiefly of common and blackheaded gulls, with a few fine specimens of the great blackbacked and herring gulls. It was about this time that the extraordinary influx of little gulls appeared on our coast, which I shall describe in a separate notice.

*Gray Phalarope*.—A single specimen shot at Cley early in the month.

*Purple Sandpiper*.—A single bird shot on a common near Dereham, in quite an inland situation, probably driven in by the gales.

#### MARCH.

*Gray Shrike*.—A male shot at Ringstead, on the 2nd.

*Spotted Crane*.—An unusually small specimen of this rail was shot at Thorpe, near Norwich, on the 3rd—an early date for this species, which seldom appears before the end of March. The beak measured only  $\frac{3}{4}$ ths of an inch; total length of bird  $8\frac{5}{8}$  inches; extent of wings  $13\frac{3}{8}$  inches.

*Sclavonian Grebe*.—See Mr. Gunn's note in the 'Zoologist' (S. S. 2225).

*Hooper Swan*.—Only three wild swans are said to have been seen on Breydon during the winter. A fine bird was shot at Oulton, near Lowestoft, on the 4th.

*Bittern*.—Another specimen in our market on the 2nd. Towards the middle of the month one was heard "booming" on Hoveton Broad, where a pair have nested the last two or three years.

*Blackthroated Diver*.—A blackthroated diver, immature, shot about this date.

*Goosander*.—A fine pair shot on Gunton Lake, near Cromer, on the 7th, and two females on the 20th.

*Brent Goose*.—Several examples in the Norwich market between the 12th and 27th.

*Peregrine*.—A fine old female shot at Gunton on the 10th.

*Wild-foecl*.—Several fine old male pochard, wigeon, tufted and scaup ducks in the market late in this month.

*Garganey*.—A beautiful adult pair shot at Gunton, near Lowestoft, on the 25th.

*Sky Lark*.—Four or five buff-coloured varieties of this species have been killed lately.

*Puffin*.—A specimen sent up from Cley on the 30th, having the small brown narrow beak of the immature bird.

*Rednecked Grebe*.—A magnificent male, in full breeding plumage, was shot on Easton Broad, near Southwold, Suffolk, on the 28th.

*Shoveler*.—Several adult birds, of both sexes, seen about this time; three males were sent up to Norwich on the 28th.

*Hawfinch*.—Three adult males shot, on the 28th, at Hathersett, near Norwich, where they would certainly have nested.

#### APRIL.

*Black Redstart*.—See Mr. Gunn's note in 'Zoologist' (S. S. 2222). The first adult male known to have occurred in Norfolk.

*Bittern*.—The bird at Hoveton still heard "booming" at times up to the 10th of this month.

*Jack Snipe*.—Extremely abundant during the first week of this month. About two dozen were brought in to one birdstuffer—evidence of a large separate flight of these birds.

*Black Tern*.—One shot on the 25th, and a pair, male and female, on the 28th.

*Garganey*.—An adult male shot at Brunstead on the 23rd.

*Osprey*.—An old female shot, near Beeston Hall, Norwich, on the 19th.

*Peregrine*.—A young male killed early in the month.

*Great Spotted Woodpecker*.—One shot at Kirby on the 12th.

*Kite*.—A fine female taken at Plumstead on the 22nd: now very rare in Norfolk.

#### MAY.

*Little Bittern*.—An adult female is said to have been shot at Fincham, on the 2nd, by a gamekeeper of Sir William Ffolkes, and preserved by Mr. Wilson, of Lynn.

*Ring Ouzel*.—One shot on the 10th, and others seen.

*Spotted Crake*.—Another specimen shot at Thorpe, near Norwich, on the 2nd.

*Wood Sandpiper*.—See Mr. Gunn's note (Zool. S. S. 2225).

*Garganey*.—An adult male, at Stalham, on the 12th; and another from Sutton.

*Great Spotted Woodpecker*.—An adult female shot at Wroxham, on the 21st.

*Ruff*.—A ruff and reeve were shot at Feltwell Fen, on the 9th, out of a flock of fourteen or fifteen, but of which only four appeared to be ruffs.

*Turtle Dove*.—Extremely numerous this season in all parts of the county. At Keswick and other places near Norwich I have observed them busily feeding on the fallows, particularly near the fences; and one which I dissected had the crop and stomach filled with the seeds of plaintain, wild trefoil and persicary.

*Swallow and Martin*.—Several of these birds, as in the spring of 1869, were picked up dead previous to the commencement of the hot dry weather. A broadman at Surlingham tells me that on the first hot night, about the second week in May, the water was so densely covered with sand martins he could scarcely row without striking them. They flew all round him like bees, and fed on the insects that he disturbed with his oars, apparently starved into a shocking state of tameness. He had never seen them in such numbers before, but most of them had left by the next morning.

*Oriole*.—An adult female shot at Fincham, during this month, was preserved by Mr. Baker, of Cambridge. See also Mr. Gunn's notice of one (Zool. S. S. 2221).

#### JULY.

*Wood Sandpiper*.—An adult pair, male and female, killed on Breydon, on the 18th, and another male at Caston on the 30th.

*Spoonbill*.—An example was seen at Salthouse on one or two occasions this month.

*Hen Harrier*.—Mr. Gunn received a nest of four young in the down, from Hickling, on the 23rd, two of which were forwarded alive to Lord Lilford, but they unfortunately died through delay on the journey. Both this species and Montagu's harrier only occasionally nest in Norfolk now-a-days.

## AUGUST.

*Wood Sandpiper*.—These birds, usually very rare in this county, have been met with in several instances this autumn. On the 3rd a bird of the year was shot in some marshes at Cley, and one or two others were seen; and on the 6th, near the same spot, five more were killed, making the family group of two old and four young ones. At Beeston, near Cromer, the week before, some thirty or forty sandpipers (whether green or wood was not ascertained) frequented the margins of a large duck-pond.

*Montagu's Harrier*.—Three immature birds of this species, but full-fledged, were also shot at Hickling, on the 3rd, and sent to Mr. Gunn on that date, and a fourth about three days later. These, like the hen harriers, had been bred in that neighbourhood; two proved to be males, one a female, and of the fourth the sex was not noticed.

*Greenshank*.—An immature female shot at Hingham, on the 11th, and another at Hickling, on the 16th; another seen with the last. Stomachs filled with small aquatic insects.

*Norfolk Plover*.—A male killed on the coast, at Hunstanton, on the 10th.

*Dotterel*.—Four shot by a shepherd at Feltwell, on the 26th.

*Skua*.—An immature specimen, apparently of Richardson's skua, was shot at Blakeney on the 27th.

*Great Snipe*.—A female, immature, shot at East Ruston, on the 31st.

*Little Stint and Reeve*.—Two immature little stints and a young reeve were shot at Blakeney on the 31st.

*Marsh Harrier*.—An immature female, with straw-coloured head, was killed at Catfield on the 30th.

HENRY STEVENSON.

Norwich, October 10, 1870.

*Erratum*.—In the final paragraph of my last communication (S. S. 2058) for *Swan* read *Smew*.—H. S.

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*Shore Larks on the Norfolk Coast in the Winter of 1869-70.*

By HENRY STEVENSON, Esq., F.L.S.

IN the March number of the 'Zoologist' (S. S. 2058) I recorded the occurrence of five birds of this species at or near Yarmouth,



between the 7th of November and the 14th of December, 1869. These, it would seem, were part of a considerable flock which had reached our shores, and become scattered, by the persecution of gunners, into small parties of five or six, as between the 12th and 15th of January of this year no less than twelve specimens were sent up to Norwich for preservation from the neighbourhood of Salthouse, and two others, I understand, were too much shot to be worth preserving.

A gunner at Salthouse, who obtained most of the examples killed there, informs me that he saw the first one during the frosty weather which began about Christmas Day, and after the weather broke up he never saw more than five together. They frequented the low marshes that are occasionally flooded by the sea, but were then dry: they kept by themselves, and did not consort with other small birds on the beach. All had left by the 18th of January. The stomachs of three birds (one male and two females), sent me on the 12th, were filled with black seeds, minute pebbles and grit.

Of this species, at one time considered a great rarity in Norfolk, upwards of *thirty-eight* specimens have been killed since the first example was procured in 1830, and many others have been killed in Suffolk, which scarcely agrees with the statements made in recent letters in the 'Times' as to the very rare occurrence of the shore lark in England.

In all cases these birds have been met with in close proximity to the coast, during the months of November, December and January, or on their return northwards in March and April. It is noticeable also that of eleven specimens shot between 1830 and 1862 all proved to be males but two; whilst of those more recently obtained by far the larger number have been females, and most of them young birds. This would almost seem to indicate that the sexes feed in separate flocks in winter, although four pairs killed in the winter of 1866-7 were undoubtedly male and female respectively; but these were all old birds.

Early in April last an adult female was also killed at Yarmouth, which probably marks the time of the passage northward of the remnant of the flock that had visited us during the previous winter months.

HENRY STEVENSON.

Norwich, September 27, 1870.

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*Notes on the Sea and Shore Birds of Aldeburgh.*

By J. G. TUCK, Esq.

July 23. Shot a lesser blackbacked gull, in full adult plumage; also, out of a small flock, a dunlin in full summer dress. The young dunlins have already appeared on the coast.

August 1. Shot the first snipe: some had been seen the previous week. Met with a small flock of wood sandpipers to-day in the mere, and killed one; three others fell to my gun during the next fortnight: the note of this bird is peculiar, somewhat resembling that of its congener, the green sandpiper, but shriller: the two species much resemble each other on the wing, but the wood sandpiper may be recognized by its frequenting the most central part of the mere, and generally rising in small flocks of six or eight, whereas the green sandpiper is almost invariably found by the edges of rivers or ditches, and it is an uncommon occurrence to meet with more than a pair together: in this it resembles the common sandpiper, which is common at Aldeburgh in the summer, but does not breed there.

August 3. A very fine green sandpiper, in perfect plumage, was shot by a friend, and presented to me.

August 6. Two more green sandpipers came into my possession, one an immature bird, the other an old bird in very strong moult. This day I obtained a very young razorbill auk, which was shot on the river.

August 15. This day I saw a small flock of greenshanks and killed one. A gentleman staying in the town shot a splendid adult great crested grebe, while swimming in the river close to Slaughden Quay: it was beginning to assume the winter dress.

August 24. Found a large flock of curlew sandpipers in the mere, and killed several of them. All the specimens I obtained were young: these birds have a strong fishy taste.

August 26. The mere this morning was very full of different species of waders. I procured the curlew sandpiper, the turnstone, the knot and the bartailed godwit—all immature, except one knot, which was in nearly full summer dress.

August 29. A friend killed a young ruff and six curlew sandpipers at one shot. I picked up a very fine male turnstone dead in the mere: the contrast between the adult male and the young, which are plentiful, is very striking.

August 31. Shot a greenshank and an adult female shoveler duck.

September 6. Fell in with a small flock of little stints: they were frequenting the margin of a large pool, and were very tame, but having large shot I only obtained one.

September 8. Shot two more little stints and a Temminck's stint: when one of these birds is shot one or more of the rest will often flutter round it and afford an easy shot: this I thought was only the case when one of a pair was shot, until I killed a little stint in the act of hovering over the Temminck's stint as it was lying dead. To-day I had the pleasure of seeing, in the flesh, the alpine swift which was mentioned in the 'Zoologist' for October (S. S. 2345): its companion has not been seen again. I received an adult curlew sandpiper, in partial summer dress, to-day.

September 10. Three large geese have been frequently seen about the Thorpe Mere lately, where they have been associating with the common domestic species. One was shot to-day, and proved to be an adult male graylag goose, in full plumage. The breast is marked with small black streaks, somewhat resembling the whitefronted goose; but the much greater size, together with the colour of the legs, identifies the species. This is one of the rarest geese on this coast.

September 13. Little stints are unusually plentiful, and associate with the curlew sandpiper and dunlin: I have obtained the three species at one shot.

September 19. Two immature sheldrakes, out of a party of six, were shot in the mere to-day.

October 7. Saw a Royston crow near Norwich.

October 8. Received a snow bunting from Aldeburgh.

J. G. TUCK.

Tostoch House, near Bury St. Edmunds,

October 13, 1870.

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*Extracts from a Memoir intituled 'A Monograph of the Alcidae.'*

By ELLIOTT COUES, A.M., M.D.

(Continued from S. S. 2334).

Genus *URIA* (Moehr.), Brisson.

Bill much shorter than the head, about equal in the tarsus, straight, rather stout, moderately compressed; culmen at first straight, then

rapidly deflected; rictus straight, except just at tip; gonys ascending, straight, short, about half as long as the culmen. No groove in sides of upper mandible near its tip; commissural edge of upper mandible scarcely inflected. Nasal fossa wide, long, deeply excavated, partially bare of feathers, which do not wholly obstruct the nostrils. Feathers extending on sides of lower mandible with a salient rounded outline. Wings and tail very short, the latter contained about two or two-thirds times in the length of the former from the carpal joint to the end of longest primary; tail slightly rounded. Tarsus much compressed, entirely covered with polygonal reticulations, somewhat scutelliform on the inner aspect; slightly shorter than the middle toe without its claw. Outer and middle toes equal in length; the claw of the former much smaller than that of the latter, tip of inner claw just reaching base of middle one. Claws compressed, moderately arched and acute; the outer one grooved along its outer aspect, the middle one greatly dilated along its inner edge. No postocular furrow in the plumage.

In the preceding diagnosis the characters of the genus are so drawn as to exclude the large species of *Lomvia*. Few writers have made this generic distinction, for which, notwithstanding, there is abundant reason, as may be seen upon a critical comparison of the two types of form, and as will be satisfactorily demonstrated at length under head of *Lomvia*. It need only be noted here, that the structure of the bill and feet are in many respects very different in the two genera.

The genus as here framed comprehends three distinct species, intimately allied to each other.

Disregarding other and less prominent though very valid distinctions, the three species of *Uria* may be at once recognized by the following characteristics:—

|                                                                 |                                                            |                       |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| A large white space on wing, entire.                            | No white about head.                                       | - 1. <i>Grylle</i> .  |
| A large white space on wing, partially divided by a black line. | No white about head.                                       | - 2. <i>Columba</i> . |
| No white on wing.                                               | Feathers around and behind eye and at base of bill, white. | - 3. <i>Carbo</i> .   |

Or they may be still more briefly and quite as satisfactorily characterized thus:—*Carbo*, upper and under surfaces of wings black; *Grylle*, upper and under surfaces of wings white; *Columba*, upper surface of wings white, under black.

The division of the white mirror on the upper surface of the wings of *Columba* is not the most important point of coloration, though the



most obvious, upon casual inspection, by which the species differs from *Grylle*. A still stronger diagnostic character lies in the absence of white on the under surface of the wings.

*Uria Grylle* (Linn.), Brünn.—Habitat: European and American coasts and islands of the North Atlantic; very abundant. Arctic Ocean. Spitzbergen, Iceland, Greenland. On the American coast, in winter, south to New Jersey coast. Rare or accidental in the north Pacific, where replaced by *Columba* and *Carbo*.—? Kamtschatka (Mus. Pays-Bas, fide Schlegel.\*) Herald Island, Arctic Ocean (Cassin, Pr. A. N. S., Ph., 1862, p. 323); Spec. in Mus. Acad. Philad., Smiths. Inst., Bost. Soc. Nat. Hist.; Essex Inst.; Cab. G. N. Lawrence; author's Cab.

Adult, summer plumage.—Bill and claws black. Mouth, legs and feet brilliant vermilion-red, tinged with carmine. Entire plumage plumbeous or fuliginous black, with a tint of invisible green. Wings and tail pure black, the former with a large oval space on the upper coverts, all the under coverts and the subscapulars pure white.

This perfect breeding plumage is temporary, and lasts but a short time. Very many individuals do not assume it until June, and it is usually retained only during this and the succeeding month. Most specimens collected in May are found to still have some traces of the winter plumage, below described.

Adult, during autumnal change. The first indication of the moult is seen in the wings and tail, and is to be observed in nearly all specimens taken after July. By the latter part of this month, after incubation and nursing are finished, the wing and tail feathers become much worn, and faded, turning to a light brownish gray towards their tips. The white mirror shows scattered traces of dull brown. The body colour loses its hue of green, and becomes more fuliginous brown. Isolated white feathers are scattered over the whole body; or the dark feathers acquire white tips. With the falling of the quill-feathers, which may take place very rapidly, and deny for a season all power of flight, the bird is in the following condition, which is the pure *moulting* state, exactly intermediate between the summer and winter plumages: No. 18254, Mus. Smiths., Labrador, Aug. 14, 1860. E. Coues. Wing-feathers renewed, pure black, but not fully grown;

\* Although this author does not recognize the specific validity of *U. columba*, and would therefore range specimens of the latter under *grylle* in his catalogue, a specimen (No. 5) there enumerated appears to be this species, as is inferrible from the expression "Au miroir d'un blanc pur."

wing from the carpus only 4·50 long. Mirror of renewed feathers, almost or quite pure white, but small; under wing-coverts and axillars pure white. Head and neck all around, rump, and whole under parts marbled with black and white in equal quantity, the bird looking as if dusted over with flour. Back black, most of the feathers lightly bordered with white, the scapulars more largely white. A still further increase of white produces the following:—

Adult, winter plumage.—Wings and tail black, the mirror and under wing-coverts faultlessly white. Head and neck all around, rump and entire under parts pure white; the back (and frequently the crown and back of neck) black, more or less variegated with white. Audubon figures this condition very nearly.

The change in spring—mostly occurring during April and May—is the reverse of that already described as the autumnal moult.

Fledglings. — (Labrador, July, 1860, E. Cones, Mus. Smiths. Length about 6·00; bill ·50; tarsus ·60; middle toe and claw ·90, etc. Wholly covered with soft woolly puffy down, fuliginous brownish black; bill and feet brownish black.

Young, first plumage.—Traces of the down on various parts of the body; the bird probably just beginning to fly; length about 10·00, wing 11·50; bill 1·00, black; tarsus 1·25; reddish dusky, as also are the toes. Upper parts plumbeous or sooty black, scarcely varied with white. Mirror beginning to appear, as white spotting on a blackish ground. Entire under parts white, thickly marbled, rayed and undulated with light touches of dusky.

This state tends to pass directly into a condition exceedingly similar to, if not identical with, that of the adults in winter. But birds of the first winter may, at least early in the season, be distinguished from old ones by a certain “feel” of the plumage, and a shorter, weaker bill, less developed as to its ridges and angles.

Accidental variations.—The foregoing descriptions apply to the various stages of plumage, which are strictly normal in character, and which, though unending in precise degree, and varying with almost every individual, merge insensibly into each other. The species is, however, also very subject to accidental and entirely abnormal variations. Of these, albinism is the most common. (Spec. in Mus. Acad. Philad.). Entirely milk-white, without a trace of black; bill and feet light-coloured; eyes probably pink in life. The opposite condition of melanism is described by authors. This consists in the total absence of white on the wings; and is apparently of infrequent

occurrence. Both these conditions have been described and named as characterizing distinct species. In the latter, the bird must not be confounded with *Uria Carbo*, which is totally different.

Dimensions.—Adult: Length (average), 13·00; extent (average), 22·50; wing 5·50 to 6·25; tail 2·00, a little more or less; bill along culmen 1·30; along rictus 1·75; along gonys ·65; depth at base ·45, width ·35; tarsus 1·25; middle toe and claw 1·75, outer do. slightly less, inner do. 1·40.

It may be of advantage to look closely into the formation of the white area upon the wing of this species, to the end that its composition may be clearly understood, and recognized as different from that which obtains in the allied species, *U. Columba*. The mirror upon the upper coverts varies to a degree, and in a precisely similar way, in each species; but when perfect constantly presents a radical difference.

When *Uria grylle* is observed flying, as is its wont, low over the water with rapid beats of the wings, the eye receives the impression of a black bird, with a large white circular spot on the wing. This spot is constantly in view, and represents the retinal image resulting from the white spaces upon both the upper and under surface of the wings blended together by the rapid motion of the wings. Those who have observed *Uria grylle* in its native haunts will appreciate the pertinence of this remark. *Uria Columba* presents no such peculiarity of appearance, there being no white upon the under surface of the wings; and the eye readily follows the movement of the small white space upon the wings, as with the changing attitudes of the bird, it is now apparent, now lost to view.

In *Uria grylle* the row of great coverts upon the secondary quills are basally black, terminally white. The outermost are white for rather less than half their length, and the white occupies chiefly the exterior webs. Nearer the body they are white for more than half their length, and the white occupies both webs of the feathers. The next row of coverts are wholly white in their entire length, except perhaps for a very brief space just at their base; and they are throughout long enough to cover entirely the dark portion of the first row, reaching a little beyond and overlying the commencement of the white upon the latter; so that the white is continuous and unbroken. One or two more rows of coverts have precisely the same character and continue the white space uninterrupted. The shorter coverts, for about half an inch from the edge of the antibrachium are black; the

last of these, however, are broadly tipped with white, which white portion overlies the extreme bases of the next row, blending its colour with that of the latter; the anterior edge of the mirror being thus the line of union of the black and white portions of these coverts, taken collectively.

In *Uria Columba* the row of great coverts is externally wholly black, or at most the outermost feathers have only a very narrow white tip. The amount of white on the feathers increases rapidly from without inwards, until on the innermost there is nearly or quite as much white as in *U. grylle*. In consequence of the small amount of white on these coverts, the next row of coverts do not overlie, nor even reach it, there being left a broad space of dusky between the white tips of the second row of coverts and those of the first, which space rapidly diminishes from the edge of the wing towards the body, forming the curved crescent of dusky which is obvious upon the wing of this species.

The mirror of *Uria grylle* is subject to much variation, which, however, never obscures its distinctive characters in any decided degree. The greater coverts may be wholly dusky, then the mirror is the same as before, except in its smaller size; the next row may be tipped with dusky, so that no white comes forward to coalesce with that of the greater row, and an appearance like that of *U. Columba* is produced, which need not deceive, since the dusky results from the second row of coverts instead of the first: all the wing-coverts may be tipped with dusky, producing a variegated or spotted mirror: finally, the mirror may be only indicated by a few isolated white feathers, or may be altogether wanting. It is to be borne in mind that the difference in the mirror of *U. grylle* and *Columba* is only one of the most obvious distinctions, but not the most specific. In the very possibly occurring cases in which there is absolutely no difference between specimens in this respect, the absence of the white under the wing and the shape of the bill readily distinguish *U. Columba* from *grylle*.

Perhaps no bird has so many synonyms as *U. grylle*. Independently of its reference to divers genera, a large number of nominal species have been instituted upon its various stages of plumage, some of them requiring brief notice. A very common name for the species among pre-Linnean writers was "*Columba grœnlandica*"—obviously a mere rendering into Latin of a popular designation. The word "*grylle*" made an early entry into the records, designating the adult plumage. *Grylloides* of Brûnnich represents a variegated condition, and *balthica* of the same author an immature or winter state. *Lacteolus* of the



older authors seems to have been based upon the albino condition, the bird being described as "*niveus, rostro pedibusque ex carneo fusciscentibus*": it is possible that Pallas, who introduced the word, may have really based it upon a specimen of *Columba*, but this is a point of no special consequence. Bonnaterre has another name, "*nivea*," for the same condition, quoting Pallas, *Sp. Z.*, v. p. 33. Brisson and Brehm both have a large number of nominal species, not necessary here to particularize. In 1817 Vieillot (*l. supra cit.*) described an adult under the name of *Uria leucoptera*, erroneously assigning it dimensions nearly equal to those of *Lomvia troile*: at least the presumption is that this *leucoptera* is nothing but a large *U. grylle*, though he must have been perfectly familiar with the latter. Even so late as 1824 *grylle* is redescribed as *Uria scapularis*. The "*Uria Mandtii*" of Lichtenstein requires attention, having been extensively quoted as a synonym of, or employed to designate, *U. Columba*: it is not possible to determine, from the description, whether *Mandtii* is really based upon *Columba* or upon *grylle*; but Dr. Schlegel describes a specimen from Spitzbergen, in the *Mus. Pays-Bas.*, "*un des individus types de l'Uria Mandtii de Lichtenstein, obtenu du Musée de Berlin*," as having the white feathers of the mirror tipped with clear brown, and the wing and the tail feathers faded grayish: this is a common condition of autumnal specimens of *grylle*, and the description does not point more particularly to *Columba* than to this species: upon the whole it may be best to regard *Mandtii*, *Licht.*, as a synonym of *grylle*, though the name as used by Brandt, Bonaparte and some others refers unmistakably to *Columba*. A certain *Uria unicolor* is described by Faber and Benecken, and admitted as distinct in the '*Comptes Rendus*' by Bonaparte, who moreover places it in a different subgenus from *grylle*. Bonaparte does not use the term to designate *Carbo*, *Pall.*, which latter he gives as distinct. The name seems to have been based upon the melanotic state of plumage of *grylle*. Dr. Schlegel describes, in the ninth livraison of the *Mus. Pays-Bas Catalogues*, one of Faber's type specimens from Greenland, as being "*Au plumage d'un noir enfumé absolument uniforme.*"

*Uria Columba* (Pallas), Cassin.—Habitat: Asiatic and American coasts of the North Pacific, Kamtschatka (*Mus. Acad. Philada.*), Russian America, Washington Territory, California (*Mus. Smiths. Inst.*). Breeds on the islands off the coast of California.

Bill stouter than that of *U. grylle*, more obtuse at the tip; upper mandible with the culmen straight, or even just appreciably convex,

suddenly deflected; rictus straight, ascending to near the tip; gonys and outline of inferior mandibular rami straight.

Adult.—Entirely fuliginous or plumbeous-black, with a shade of invisible green. White mirror on wing-coverts. Nearly divided in two by a broad rather curved oblique line of blackish. No white on under wing-coverts, these being grayish brown. Bill and claws black. Mouth and feet vermilion-red, tinged with carmine. "Iris white" (label). Length 13·00; extent 23·00; wing 7·00; tail 2·20; tarsus 1·25; middle and outer toe and claw 1·90; inner toe and claw 1·45; bill along culmen 1·20, along rictus 1·80, along gonys ·65; depth at base ·40; width ·30.

This species closely resembles *U. grylle*, but differs in being upon an average larger, the wing particularly longer; the bill stouter, straighter, more obtuse at the point; and the marking of the wings different, as above described. The changes of plumage and the individual variations, as exhibited in the large series of specimens examined, are entirely parallel with those of *Uria grylle*. It is worthy of note that this species occurs, in summer, upon the Pacific coast of America, much south of the corresponding latitudes on the Atlantic coasts frequented at this season by *U. grylle*.

One of the earliest indications, if not the first, of this species, may be recognized in the variety of the black guillemot from Kamtschatka, described by Pennant: this is said to have a white oblique line issuing from the white spot on the wing. The var.  $\beta$  of *U. grylle* of Latham and Donndorff is the same bird. Pallas appears to be the first to bestow a specific name. The question involved in the *Uria Mandtii* of Lichtenstein has already been considered in the preceding article.

*Uria Carbo* (Pallas), Brandt.—Habitat: "In oceano orientale circa insulas Aleuticas, præsertim Unalaschka" (Pallas), Kamtschatka (Mus. Acad. Philada.), Japan (Mus. Smiths. Inst.)

Larger than *U. grylle* and *U. Columba*; the bill, especially larger, stouter and straighter. Feathers of nasal fossæ and those around base of lower mandible whitish. A conspicuous white area around eyes, and extending an inch or so behind them. No white on either surface of wings. Rest of plumage brownish black, becoming ashy black on the under parts; perhaps deep plumbeous-black, with a shade of greenish, in more mature specimens than those examined. Bill black. Legs and feet chrome-yellow, tinged with vermilion; webs coral-red in the dried state, probably vermilion or carmine-red in life. Length 14 to 15 inches; wing 7·75; tail 2·50; culmen 1·55; commissure 2·20;

from feathers on side of lower mandible to tip 1·50, tarsus 1·36; middle toe and claw 2·10, outer 2·00, inner 1·60. Another specimen:—culmen 1·70; commissure 2·10; feathers on side of lower mandible to its tip 1·55; depth of bill at base ·50; width at same point ·38.

An interesting species of *Uria*, easily recognized by its peculiar colours, which are different from those of either of the other two species here described. Although unmistakably characterized by Pallas in 1811, it seems to have been overlooked by many subsequent writers. It appears, however, in the monograph of Prof. Brandt, who was well acquainted with Pallas' labours and discoveries, and is on different occasions noticed by Mr. Cassin, who has given a figure of it in the Atlas accompanying Prof. Baird's 'Birds of North America.' There is a fine specimen in the Philadelphia Academy, from Kamtschatka, and a mutilated one in the Smithsonian Institution, from Japan. The latter is interesting on account of the new and unusual locality. The bird is chiefly an inhabitant of the higher latitudes on the coasts of the Pacific Ocean. It has not yet become a common bird in collections.

The species is somewhat larger than *U. grylle* or *U. Columba*, but chiefly noticeable, as far as form is concerned, by the greater stoutness and straightness of the bill, very observable upon direct comparison. The culmen and commissure are nearly straight almost to the very tip, where they are rather suddenly decurved. The gonys and mandibular rami are quite straight; the eminence at their symphysis is well marked. The nasal fossa is short, but wide and deep; the feathers reach to the nostrils, but do not cover them: these nasal feathers, as well as those around the base of the lower mandible, are dull white. The eyes are conspicuously encircled with white, which stretches behind them for about an inch, tapering to a fine point. There are no indications of white on the wings. With the exceptions just mentioned the whole plumage is sooty black, tinged with slaty above, with brownish below, and becoming light ashy on the under surfaces of the wings. The bill is black, as in the other species; the inside of the mouth probably carmine-red in life. The feet are light yellow in the dried specimens, doubtless vermilion or carmine-red in life. The webs are still tinged with this colour. The claws are black.

It is possible that the plumage just described is not that of the perfectly adult bird, in which, when fully mature, the white about the sides of the head and base of the bill may not be exactly as here described, and the body colours may be purer and more intense. Dr. Schlegel describes a specimen from the Kurile Islands as "d'un

noir enfumé uniforme;" and another, from Sachalin Island, as an "individu au plumage imparfait; d'un brun fuligineux, passant au blanchâtre sur la face et les côtés de la tête."

(To be continued.)

*A List of the Hemiptera collected by J. K. Lord, Esq., in Egypt, along the African Shore of the Red Sea and in Arabia; with Descriptions of the Species new to Science.* By F. WALKER, F.L.S.

(Continued from Zool. S. S. 2341).

Fam. RHOPALIDÆ.—Gen. RHOPALUS, *Schill.*

14. *Capitatus*. *Lygæus capitatus*, *Fabr. Ent. Syst.* iv. 169. Cairo. Inhabits Europe.

Fam. LYGÆIDÆ.—Gen. LYGÆUS, *Fabr.*

15. *Equestris*. *Cimex equestris*, *Linn. Syst. Nat.* i. 726. Mount Sinai. Wâdy Gennèh. Harkeko. Tajura. Massowah. Inhabits Europe and W. Asia.

16. *Militaris*, *Fabr. Ent. Syst.* iv. 147. Mount Sinai. Wâdy Ferran. Tòr. Wells of Moses. Inhabits Europe, Madeira, Teneriffe and Hindostan.

17. *Leucospilus*. Deep black. Head beneath, pectus and abdomen luteous or red. First joint of the antennæ short; second much longer than the third; fourth a little longer and thicker than the third. Prothorax setose, with a broad red band occupying the fore part and emitting three streaks into the hind part. Fore wings luteous, with an irregular black band which does not join the outer border; membrane deep black, with a snow-white spot on the inner angle, and a larger elliptical transverse snow-white spot in the disk. Hind wings blackish cinereous. *Var. β.*—Fore wings without a band. Length of the body  $3\frac{1}{2}$ — $4\frac{1}{2}$  lines. Tajura.

Gen. NYSIUS, *Dallas.*

18. *Senecionis*. *Heterogaster Senecionis*, *Schill. Beitr.* i. 87, pl. 8, f. 1. Tajura. Inhabits Europe.

Gen. RHYPAROCHROMUS, *Curtis.*

19. *Semidolens*. Black, elongate-subfusiform. Head reddish, with a short stout spine by the insertion of each antenna, and with two



furrows in front, where it is elongated. Proboscis, antennæ and legs pale testaceous. Third joint of the antennæ blackish towards the tip; fourth blackish, whitish towards the base. Prothorax extremely minutely punctured, with a transverse furrow; each side with a slender whitish stripe, which proceeds from the fore border and does not extend to the hind border. Abdomen beneath with an abbreviated whitish stripe along each side. Corium of the fore wings whitish on half the basal surface and with a large whitish spot near each tip; membrane blackish, with a whitish spot on the base of the fore border. Length of the body 5 lines. Hor Tamanib. Harkeko.

Gen. MICROPUS, *Spinola*.

20. *Discolor*. Blackish, narrow, smooth, depressed, nearly linear. Head nearly triangular, acute in front. Antennæ testaceous; second joint longer than the third; fourth blackish, nearly as long as the third. Prothorax quadrate, a little narrower in front, with a testaceous rim. Abdomen testaceous, blackish towards the tip. Legs testaceous; tarsi blackish. Fore wings testaceous, less than half the length of the abdomen, blackish towards the base. Length of the body 2 lines. Harkeko.

Gen. CYMUS, *Hahn*.

21. *Cincticornis*. Black. Head and prothorax slightly setose, thickly punctured. Head elongate-triangular. Proboscis and second joint of antennæ testaceous. Scutellum testaceous, with a black basal triangular spot. Tibiæ testaceous; tips black. Corium of the fore wings testaceous, with a blackish point at the tip; membrane whitish, pellucid. Length of the body  $1\frac{1}{2}$ — $1\frac{3}{4}$  line. Harkeko.

Fam. PYRRHOCORIDÆ.—Gen. PYRRHOCORIS, *Fallen*.

22. *Ægyptius*. *Cimex Ægyptius*, *Linn. Syst. Nat.* ii. 727. Perhaps a variety of *P. apterus*. Souakin.

Fam. HARPACTORIDÆ.—Gen. HARPACTOR, *Delaporte*.

23. *Signiceps*. Black, pilose, red beneath. Head with two red streaks in front of the antennæ, with two converging red streaks behind the antennæ, and with a lanceolate red streak on the hind part; under side with a black lanceolate streak proceeding from each eye. Rostrum red towards the base. Fore division of the prothorax tuberculate, with two larger tubercles on the hind border and with a red spine on each side in front; hind part roughly punctured, bordered with red except

in front, and having a slight impressed longitudinal line. Scutellum with a red tip. Abdomen with black transverse streaks on each side beneath. Legs black; femora beneath and coxæ red. Fore border of the fore wings red at the base. Length of the body 6 lines. Mount Sinai.

Gen. CORANUS, *Curtis*.

24. *Arenaceus*. Testaceous-cinereous, or sand-colour, minutely punctured, with short bristles. Ocelli behind the eyes seated on tubercles. Eyes black, shining, prominent. Antennæ testaceous, darker towards the tips. Prothorax somewhat gibbous in front of the transverse furrow; sides prominent, much rounded; hind border slightly excavated in the middle. Abdomen reddish above, with black dots along each side. Legs short; femora and tibiæ with irregular blackish bands; fore femora mostly black. Fore wings with two reddish streaks in the corium; membrane æneous, pellucid towards the tip. Length of the body  $4\frac{1}{2}$  lines. Harkeko. Tajura.

Fam. ———.—Gen. ACANTHIA, *Fabr.*

25. *Lectularia*. The bed bug. *Cimex lectularius*, *Linn. Syst. Nat.* ii. 715. Wâdy Gennèh.

Fam. NABIDÆ.—Gen. NABIS, *Latr.*

26. *Siticus*. Pale testaceous, slender. Antennæ very slender. Prothorax with three brownish stripes, which extend to the scutellum. Legs long, slender; fore femora slightly incrassated, a little longer than the middle femora, much shorter than the hind femora. Wings extending to the tip of the abdomen; hind wings pellucid. Length of the body 4 lines. Wâdy Ferran.

27. *Nabis? discifer*. Pale testaceous, long, very slender, nearly linear. Head and prothorax very minutely punctured. Head elongate-triangular, testaceous at the tip. Prothorax black, with a transverse furrow; hind part testaceous. Pectus black. Fore femora serrated beneath. Wings pellucid. Fore wings pale testaceous towards the base. Length of the body 3 lines. The specimen described is much injured. Dahleck Island.

Fam. NAUCORIDÆ.—Gen. NAUCORIS, *Geoffr.*

28. *Minusculus*. Testaceous. Head above with a lanceolate brown streak, which includes a pale spot. Prothorax with a brownish disk, which includes a pale curved streak on each side and an intermediate

pale spot. Scutellum brownish, with three pale spots. Abdomen above with black spots along each side. Fore wings brownish, with a pale streak along the base of the fore border. Length of the body 4 lines. Wâdy Ferran. Tôr.

Fam. NEPIDÆ.—Gen. NEPA, *Linn.*

29. *Grossa*, Fabr. Ent. Syst. iv. 62. Wâdy Feran. Sidri. Hôr Tamanib. Inhabits W. Africa.

Gen. NOTONECTA, *Linn.*

30. *Nanula*. Pale testaceous. Eyes brown. Femora and tibiæ striped with black. Wings pellucid. Length of the body 4 lines. Shoobra.

F. WALKER.

(To be continued.)

*Loss of Cows from eating Acorns.*—A farmer at Blakeney, Gloucestershire, has lost two valuable cows from eating acorns in a field where they were turned to pasture. On Saturday evening a third was despaired of, under the same circumstances. During the late hurricane large quantities fell, of which the cattle partook too freely; in fact, on examining the stomach of one of them two bushels of undigested acorns were found.—*Morning Post*.

*Plague of Rabbits in Australia.*—Warnambool, June 17, 1870. About three years ago a Mr. Robinson turned out thirteen wild rabbits on his run, and now more than £7000 have been spent in trying to get rid of them. There are said to be over 50,000 of them in the district, and they are spreading all over the country. We are now about forming a company to kill and preserve them for exportation. Two thousand four hundred rabbits were killed in one day by a party of gentlemen with guns about three weeks since, and they were all destroyed, not one of them used, to compel the dealers to kill for themselves, and so help to destroy them. It is said that over 100,000 have been killed, and still they appear as numerous as ever; and all these from thirteen rabbits in a little over three years!—*From the 'Field.'*

*Eagles in North Wales.*—While ascending Snowdon with a friend, on the 30th of September last, when near the summit we left the regular track in order to obtain a good view of the great precipice which looks north towards the pass of Llanberis, and is called, I believe, in Welch, "Crib Goch." Just as we reached the edge an eagle rose slowly from beneath our feet, and as we watched it continued for more than an hour circling and soaring round the precipitous sides of Glyder Vawr, until it was joined by its mate, and both birds were lost among the distant hills. I may add that two years ago I became acquainted with the eagle in its native haunts in Aberdeenshire, so that I had no doubt as to what the birds were. I presume these two eagles were simply passing visitors from a more northerly breeding place, and I should be curious to

know whether they have been noticed by other persons or elsewhere on their migration further south. In former times the golden and sea eagle were probably not very scarce in the mountainous districts of Wales, but I believe they are very rarely seen there at the present day. Willughby tells us that the golden eagle was supposed to breed about Snowdon in 1678, but I have not succeeded in finding any other direct record of an eyrie in North Wales, and I should feel much interested to hear whether any such record exists in the old topographical works or county histories of Wales.—*A. G. More; Glasnevin, October 12, 1870.*

*Osprey at Poole.*—We have just received a fine specimen of the osprey (*Falco haliaetus*), shot on the 27th of September at Poole, and it is being preserved by us.—*W. Hart & Son; West End, Christchurch, Hants.*

*Harriers in Norfolk.*—On the 23rd of July I had brought me a nest of young, in the down, of the hen harrier: they were four in number, and as they were strong healthy birds I succeeded in rearing them very easily. On the 3rd of August three young birds of the ashcoloured harrier, just killed, were brought me, and on the 6th another, making four—all no doubt from one nest. These two nests of harriers were taken in the neighbourhood of one of our broads. On the 30th of August a female marsh harrier was shot at Hickling: an examination of the stomach proved it had been feeding on a coot.—*T. E. Gunn; 5, Upper St. Giles, Norwich.*

*Supposed Occurrence of Strix asio in Kent.*—Lord Clifton, “undeterred by adverse opinion” (Zool. S. S. 2343), returns to the charge, though admitting having been mistaken in the size of the nondescript owl, which he is now convinced was eight, not eleven, inches long,—i. e. nearly a third less in size (a wide difference),—whereas, in the original note (S. S. 2138) he says, to prove the size of his owl, that “it seemed a little larger than a partridge,” that is, upwards of twelve inches and a half long—fully a third bigger than the *Strix asio*. As like in size as a giant of seven feet one inch and a half would be to a dwarf of four feet nine inches. Lord Clifton says, “By careful examination of birds of known length, I conclude that its length was about eleven inches;” and this, too, after telling us that it was larger than a partridge. May he not also, in the excitement of the moment, have been mistaken with regard to colour and other points? He remarks, “I know an eared from an earless owl,” but in the previous note he says, “I can hardly call them ears.” Though it may have been *Strix asio* observed at Cobham, I cannot but think that Lord Clifton has failed to prove it.—*Henry Hadfield; High Cliff, Ventnor, Isle of Wight, October 11, 1870.*

[I think it will be better that this discussion should end here: it is now impossible to obtain any precise information either from the memory of Lord Clifton or the surmises of his critics: we must wait for a second advent of the owl, and then we shall all be ready to welcome the little stranger.—*E. Newman.*]

*Pied Flycatcher at Scilly.*—This small bird, so little known in Great Britain, except in a few counties, and which never appears in the western counties as a summer visitor, makes the Scilly Isles its residence for some days in its southern retreat in the autumn: such is the case at present, a pair having occupied the Abbey Gardens up to the present time.—*Edward Hearle Rodd; Penzance, October 13, 1870.*

*Grayheaded Wagtail at Gateshead.*—Assuming that the wagtail shot by Mr. Watson (Zool. S. S. 2343) is the true grayheaded, it is difficult to understand that this bird should have bred three times at Gateshead, and I shall be much obliged if he will further investigate the matter, as I cannot help thinking that he has confounded the



gray wagtail (*Motacilla boarula*, Lath.) with the grayheaded (*M. flava*, L.)—J. H. Gurney, jun.; 2, Beta Place, Alpha Road, N.W., October 17, 1870.

*Tawny Pipit, Ortolan Bunting and Lapland Bunting Brighton.*—I saw the following birds at Mr. Swaysland's very shortly after they were taken:—

*Tawny Pipit (Anthus campestris).* A very interesting specimen of this bird was taken near Brighton by a bird-catcher. It is a young bird of the year, and in plumage similar to the young of the sky lark in its first dress, having all the back, the scapulars and the two middle feathers of the tail edged with cream-colour. Can this bird have been bred in this country? for, though full grown, it seems almost too young to have travelled far. It will go into Mr. Monk's beautiful collection at Lewes.

*Ortolan Bunting (Emberiza hortulana).* A fine male was captured, by the aid of bird-lime, by a young gentleman in the Dyke Road, near Brighton, on the 30th of September: it was excessively fat when skinned.

*Lapland Bunting (Emberiza lapponica).* A fine young male was captured at Brighton on the 6th of October.—*Frederick Bond.*

*Second Occurrence of the Scarlet Bullfinch, near London.*—On Monday last I saw a fine young female of the scarlet bullfinch that was taken near Caen Wood, Hampstead, by a bird-catcher, on the 5th of October, 1870. I purchased the specimen, and it will go into my collection. It will be recollected that I recorded the first occurrence of this species (near Brighton in September, 1869), in the January number of the 'Zoologist' (S. S. 1984).—*Id.*; October 12, 1870.

*Be-mired Crossbills.*—On Thursday, the 6th instant, as two labourers were returning home from work, in passing through Captain's Close they observed a bird sitting upon the sluice-plank, situate at the lower end of the drain which runs through the field. One of the men, named Coggles, went to the spot, and putting his hat carefully down secured the bird, while at the same time another of a similar kind fluttered in some nettles between his knees: this was also captured. Later in the afternoon another was taken, on the same plank, by a labourer named Clark, and on the following morning one was caught by a boy on the bank, a few yards from the sluice. The birds, which proved to be crossbills (*Loxia curvirostra*), had all been in the soft mud of the drain, and were consequently unable to fly. Three of them are in the possession of Mr. Thomas Ellis, the well-known animal and bird preserver of this town, and are alive and doing well.—*'Lynn Advertiser' of October 15, 1870.* [Communicated by Mr. Gurney.]

*Nightjar near London.*—On the evening of the 1st of September a fine specimen of the nightjar (*Caprimulgus europæus*) was shot while hawking for moths on the skirts of a little copse within two hundred yards of this house, which is situated between Brandesbury Park and the North London Railway, and which is only about three miles from the Marble Arch. The occurrence of this heath-loving bird within such a very short distance of the great metropolis strikes me as being worthy of notice.—*C. Bygrave Wharton; Home Lodge, Willesden Lane, Middlesex.*

[The nightjar has often been seen on Hampstead Heath, and a reliable ornithologist tells me it has once bred there.—*E. Newman.*]

*Californian Quail in Sussex.*—Having read in your paper of one of these young birds being shot near here, I would beg to say that I have taken great trouble, at considerable expense, to rear about sixty of them. They stray away a good deal, but return two or three times a week, and feed in front of the keepers' cottages, fearless of

harm from any one, and more tame than pheasants. I would beg any one to spare them through this their first season, and would be happy to show an aviary of them to any one interested in them.—*S. M. Wilson; Searles, near Uckfield, October 11, 1870.*

[I have several communications on the occurrence of this quail in Sussex: they are without doubt some of Mr. Wilson's birds.—*E. Newman.*]

*Quails in the East of Scotland.*—Small numbers of these birds have made their appearance this year in many parts of Scotland. On September 2nd one specimen was shot by Mr. Annandale, at Lasswade, near Edinburgh; and on the 16th of the same month another specimen was obtained at Lasswade. A third was obtained at Galashiels in the beginning of October. I was informed yesterday by Mr. Small, of Edinburgh, at whose shop I have seen all these birds, that a nest containing fourteen eggs was taken last summer at Craiglockart Wood, near Edinburgh, but I am unable to discover what has become of the eggs. I may also mention that two quails were shot at Yester, in East Lothian, at the end of September last.—*R. G. Wardlaw-Ramsay; Whitehill, Lasswade, N. B., October 20, 1870.*

*Quails at Wilden, Beds.*—In the early part of this month we met with some quails while out partridge-shooting. The male bird was first killed: an hour or two later, when passing through the same field, we killed the female: a few minutes afterwards we suddenly walked into the midst of a bevy of young ones running in the stubble, when they rose; one was killed and the rest dispersed, and in the next field we came on one crouching in a hollow in the ground, which rose upon being touched with the foot, and was added to the bag.—*W. J. Chalk; Wilden Rectory, September 26, 1870.*

*Quails in Norfolk.*—Quails have been plentiful in Norfolk this autumn. I have seen two shot, and heard of several others.—*J. H. Gurney, jun.*

*Gray Plover at Blakeney.*—On the 8th of October I observed several gray plovers at Blakeney, near Cromer. Two were shot, an adult in winter plumage, and a young bird retaining some of the yellow spots which mark the first plumage.—*Id.*

*Wood Sandpipers and Greenshanks in Norfolk.*—I had all the following birds sent me in the flesh:—July 18. A pair of wood sandpipers from Yarmouth. July 30. A male wood sandpiper from Caston, near Watton. August 11. A female greenshank from Hingham. August 16. Two greenshanks seen; one, a male, shot at Hickling.—*T. E. Gunn.*

*Woodcock in August.*—A friend of mine flushed a woodcock, at Carshalton, on the 20th of August: he also shot on the same day three snipe and a common quail.—*A. H. Smee.*

*Solitary Snipe in Norfolk.*—On the 31st of August a female was shot at East Ruston, and a second was also killed a few days after by the same gunner in the same locality: he also saw another with the last mentioned, which, however, escaped.—*T. E. Gunn.*

*Schinz's Stint at Scilly.*—I have received by the packet to-day from my nephew, who is staying at the Abbey, an interesting specimen of this *Tringa*, apparently in change from summer to winter plumage. In examining it in the flesh with the dunlin in a similar state of plumage, I am more and more convinced of its specific value as distinct from *T. variabilis*. The shape, character and shortness of the bill is one; it is very much shorter,—in fact, as short as the buffbreasted sandpiper's bill,—and it fines off towards the end suddenly, and the tip is sharp and pointed. The legs are black, whereas in the dunlin the legs are a little inclined to a paler tone: there is still

a more interesting distinctive character in its plumage in this seasonal state of change. In Schinz's *Tringa* the under parts are of an unsullied white, that being the colour observable at both seasons. In the dunlin, in the partially assumed change plumage from summer to winter, the under parts are *mottled* more or less, showing the change from the dark ventral band to the pure white in its winter plumage as the *purre*. I need not say that the great character of the *white upper tail-coverts* in the present specimen is similar to those I obtained before from the Hayle Estuary.—*Edward Hearle Rodd; Penzance, October 10, 1870.*

P.S.—I forgot to mention in my communication yesterday that the spotted crake (for the first time), redbacked shrike, redshanks and ring ouzels were all at Scilly last week.—*E. H. R.; Oct. 11th.*

*American Stint*.—Referring to your inquiry as to the species to which the American stint shot by me at Northam Burrows belongs, Mr. Gould, to whom I showed the bird, considers it to be a specimen of *Tringa Wilsonii*.—*Marcus S. C. Rickards; Clifton, September 24, 1870.*

*Little Stint, &c., near Leigh*.—On the 17th of September I shot a little stint, which was flying in company with another. I also obtained two knots (local name "male") and a brace of wigeon. I saw large flocks of gulls and two or three good broods of teal and wigeon, also two greenshanks, but was unable to get near them. Wigeons were seen on the 16th for the first time this season. Wild-fowl have decidedly increased this year, and are more easily approached: this increase is no doubt due to the protection afforded to the birds during the breeding season by the Sea Birds' Preservation Act. The ten shilling tax on guns has likewise prevented a lot of boys popping away at the birds, to the great satisfaction of the regular gunners.—*A. H. Smee.*

*Gray Phalarope near Southampton*.—A gray phalarope was shot near Southampton on the 20th instant: it is the only specimen I have met with since the autumn of 1866, when they occurred in such numbers in different parts of the country, as recorded in a pamphlet by Mr. Gurney, a copy of which that gentleman kindly presented to me. The summer plumage of this specimen still predominates, the gray winter dress appearing as yet only on the scapular feathers, while in those of the 17th and 24th of September, 1866, the gray colour was much more advanced. I conclude the present specimen must be a young bird of the year.—*T. H. Goatley; 4, Strand, Southampton, October 22, 1870.*

*Gray Phalarope at Bishops Lydeard*.—I have just had a gray phalarope brought in killed close by the railway station here at Bishops Lydeard.—*Cecil Smith; Lydeard House, October 23, 1870.*

*Gray Phalaropes in North Devon: Moulting of Birds*.—It would seem that the heavy gale of last week intercepted a number of gray phalaropes on their migration, and caused them to put in for shelter on our western coasts. I have heard of sixteen having been shot in one day at Instow, in North Devon. Five of these I have examined, and am surprised to find that they are but slightly advanced in their change towards their winter dress. One would have thought that by the middle of October the gray plumage of winter would have been completely assumed; but a bird I have which was shot, some years since, in the first week of September, shows fewer of the yellow-edged feathers, and is grayer than any of the birds I have seen from Instow, obtained six weeks later in the season. In these last the throats are still

delicately tinged with buff, and the backs and shoulders exhibit a pretty mixture of gray and yellow-edged feathers. In one bird there is more of the summer rufous tint than in the rest, the upper tail-coverts being still distinctly coloured as they are in summer. Not long since I had occasion to notice how capricious moulting is with birds: some individuals are well advanced, while others have scarcely commenced their seasonal change. Out of the same flock, a short time since, I killed sanderlings in complete winter dress and others in an intermediate autumn stage of plumage. A great deal no doubt depends upon the constitution of individuals. It is with birds as with other creatures. Just as we find some children more forward with their teething than others, the most forward possessing more physical vigour and consequent powers of development; so among birds those which most rapidly pass through their moults may be regarded as exhibiting thereby a superior *physique* to those that are slower in their transition from one state of plumage to another.—*Murray A. Mathew; Bishops Lydeard, October 22, 1870.*

*Little Crake in Somersetshire.*—One of these birds was shot last week on the river near Taunton, by the son of one of the hotel-keepers of that town, who was out about the river shooting moorhens, and amongst other things brought home a specimen of the little crake, which, on account of its small size, he despised and threw away for the cat; but the father luckily saw it, and thinking it was a bird I might like, rescued it for me. The bird thus rescued is now in my collection, and a very fair specimen it makes. As Yarrell does not mention the measurements of the legs and toes, perhaps it may be worth while to add some of the measurements of those parts: the tarsus is one inch two lines; the middle toe, including the claw, 1 inch six lines; the hind toe nearly seven lines.—*Cecil Smith; October 13, 1870.*

*Great Crested Grebe feeding its Adult Young.*—A few days ago I was sitting on the bank of a large piece of water where these birds breed freely and are not uncommon, when my attention was specially attracted to an old bird which was feeding, at some distance from the rest, in company with a young and perfectly full-fledged bird of the year: it suddenly uttered for several seconds a peculiar whistling sound, and upon looking more closely at it I observed that it had caught a large fish and was holding it in its bill. The young bird, as soon as it heard the whistling, swam hastily up to its parent, who put the fish into its opened bill, from whence it was very speedily conveyed into the crop.—*H. Harpur Crewe; The Rectory, Drayton-Beauchamp, Tring, September 26, 1870.*

*Cormorant inland.*—In the 'Zoologist' for 1869 (S. S. 1921) I recorded the occurrence of a cormorant at Kimberley. I have now to mention that a specimen, an immature male, has also been captured this season, on the lake in the same locality, on the 9th of September. It would have been allowed to remain unmolested but that it cleared the fish out of the lake so rapidly.—*T. E. Gunn.*

*Pied Head in the Common Skua.*—In the 'Zoologist' (S. S. 992) there is a note on the common skua (*Lestris catarractes*), the head of which was "mottled with small patches of white feathers." I find that to have some trace of this pied appearance is the rule rather than the exception. I have noticed it in the living examples in the Zoological Gardens, which were sent from the Cape by Mr. Layard (and which are now regarded as identical with the British species); but I never saw it more strongly marked than in a specimen which I selected this morning, in Leadenhall Market, from among some pomarine skuas.—*J. H. Gurney, jun.; October 19, 1870.*



*Notes from Northam Burrows.*—During a recent visit to Northam Burrows I obtained, on the dates stated, the following birds:—

Curlew Sandpiper, on the 8th of September. A large flock of this species has been frequenting the mud-flats between Northam Burrows and Appledore for some time.

Gray Phalarope, female, on the 10th of September, and another specimen, a male bird in very fine plumage, on the 15th.

Lesser Tern. On the 13th of September two specimens, both females, in immature plumage.

Little Stint. A pair on the 14th of September.

Reeve. A specimen on the 15th of September. This bird, together with a ruff, I had observed for some time previously in company with a flock of bartailed godwits.

Knot. A flock of knots frequented the mud-flats for many days, in association with ringed plovers and dunlins, and from which I obtained a specimen in nearly full summer plumage, on the 6th of September.

I observed a pair of greenshanks on the River Taw, near Barnstaple, on the 5th of September, but, owing to their extreme wildness, was unable to obtain a specimen.—*Marcus S. C. Rickards.*

*Preservation of Sea-fowl.*—More than twenty years ago the late Archdeacon Thorp, of Durham, took a lease of the Farne and Staples Islands,—I believe with no other object than the preservation of the birds. His son, the Rev. Charles Thorp, has them now, and carries out his father's plan: he has two keepers on the island from May to the end of September; they prevent people taking the eggs or going on the islands to shoot the birds. From the opening of the season to the 14th of June they take the eggs of the gulls, eider ducks, guillemots and cormorants, and sell them in the surrounding district to be eaten: they are quite appreciated. After that time they are not disturbed. Collections are also made, to a limited extent, of all the other and rarer birds, and sold as specimens. There is no doubt the birds have largely increased in number for some years, especially the cormorants and terns. The first year my son and I visited one of the islands (soon after the Archdeacon took them) there were three broods of cormorants; this year there were upwards of one hundred. What is now wanted is to extend the "close time" for shooting from the 1st of August to the 1st of September. I can give my word that the number of young birds on the 1st of August not strong on the wing was very large. After the 1st of September they disperse all along the coast, and cannot be shot in great numbers. I believe that in future the Rev. C. Thorp will not have the eggs taken after the 1st of June. There is no doubt if the eggs were not taken at all the young would be able to take care of themselves earlier; but this mode of taking the eggs, to some extent, reimburses the rent and the wages of the men to watch. The herring gulls and the jackdaws devour the eggs of the birds to a large extent. The shooting has been carried on this year to a very small extent, in consequence of the prevalence of east winds and rough sea. The first week in August a steamboat from Shields came down with a party to shoot, and they swept some basaltic columns, where the guillemots and razorbills mainly lay, with a cannon loaded with small shot, and I hear destroyed a great number, and probably did not take up any of the dead. Urge the extension of the "close time" till the 1st of September by all means.—*George Mennell; Bamborough, near Belford, Northumberland, September 8, 1870.*

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*Large Roach in the Avon.*—The roach in the Avon at Salisbury are large and numerous. I have during the last three weeks caught many, one of which weighed two pounds and a half, and is preserved by a local bird-stuffer, and is now in my possession. I only caught two under one pound and a half.—*From the 'Field.'*

[I much regret the practice of newspaper correspondents in declining to furnish their name and address as a voucher for the *bonâ fide* character of their communications. A roach of two pounds and a half weight is very unusual.—*E. Newman*]

*Strange Discovery in Wales.*—In the vale of Clwyd, at a distance of two miles from the cathedral city of St. Asaph, are situated the Cefu Caves, which prove of much interest to the summer visitors to Rhyl and its neighbourhood. The caves are two in number, a higher and a lower. The entrance to the former and more extensive is about midway up the cliff, which is there almost perpendicular; the entrance to the latter is on a level with the bank of the river Elwy, which skirts the cliff, and during floods the waters rise high over its mouth. It was in this cave that the discovery was made last Monday. It had been rumoured of late that parties visiting this place had on several occasions seen some strange animal creeping in its dark recesses, and on Saturday visitors reported having had a good view of him, and stated it was a huge beast of the lizard tribe. On the Monday following Thomas Hughes, from Rhyl, went to try to capture him. Armed with a stout stick, he approached its reported lair, but not seeing it he decided to remain in ambush at the mouth of the cave, sheltered by a projecting ledge. After having thus waited an hour his patience was rewarded with success. He could hear in the far end a hum as of a hive of bees. The sound growing louder, and now apparently quite close, Hughes peeped round the ledge and saw the monster within three yards of him. He (Hughes) sprang towards him, and dexterously wielding his stick he dealt him a well-aimed blow upon the neck just behind the head, which caused him to stagger and reel. One more blow in the abdomen finished him. Hughes carried him home in triumph, and is now making a profit out of the affair by exhibiting him at Rhyl. The monster is of the lizard tribe, as mentioned above. Only that our country was destitute of those creatures, we should have said it was a young crocodile. It measures from the nose to the end of its tail exactly four feet seven inches, the tail being rather more than half that length. Its limbs measure twelve inches; the fore ones have five toes, and the hind ones four; it is webfooted. Above it is black, and white beneath. Its coat is mailed, quite hard, and protruding in sharp corners and angles, like the crocodile's. The head is low and flat, the mouth large and round at the end, measuring seven inches by three inches; the teeth are numerous, but small, and bear great resemblance to those of a cod-fish. There is ample scope here for naturalists to investigate the how and wherefore this strange amphibian came to be discovered in the present epoch among the hills of North Wales.—*'Times,' of October 20.*

[The fact that the 'Times' has inserted this not only without giving its authority, but also without any expression of doubt, leads one to suppose that the Editor at least did not regard it as a hoax. The 'Echo,' however, states editorially that the crocodile died in a travelling menagerie, and was purchased for exhibition by the valiant Thomas Hughes.—*E. Newman.*]



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